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SUBJECT: FINNS ON THE JULY GAERC

REF: STATE 80034

PolChief delivered reftel demarche to Acting European Correspondent Niklas Lindqvist on July 18. Lindqvist highlighted the following:

KOSOVO: The GOF is firmly behind Ahtisaari and agrees with our points. The GOF is so fully behind Ahtisaari, in fact, that it still is waiting for a UNSCR, and not even thinking about establishing an official position on what it might do if Kosovo declares independence. The GOF does not reject continued negotiations, but does reject something that might lead to "marginalizing" Ahtisaari's plan.

UKRAINE: General agreement on our points, although the GOF does not expect strong messages on energy or weapons issues to emerge from the GAERC. The tone of the upcoming EU-Ukraine summit will be positive, Finnish MFA says, although emphasis will be placed on free and fair September elections.

IRAN: Member states will get a detailed report from Solana; no conclusions expected. The Finnish national position agrees with our points (albeit not overly enthusiastic agreement on further sanctions). The Finns also want the EU to focus pressure on two tracks: pressuring Iran not only on the nuclear issue, but also on its dismal human rights record.

SUDAN: The GOF expects a lot of discussion at the GAERC about a potential EU mission, and hopes for a strong signal from France regarding its intention to deploy an ESDP mission to Chad. Finns are hopeful that this will lead to a more operational EU role, particularly in providing military support to the eventual EU police mission in Darfur. Our contacts heard our message on sanctions, but did not think this would be a major component of GAERC deliberations.

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